

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF
THE TORRANCE TRAFFIC COMMISSION**

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

The Torrance Traffic Commission convened in a regular meeting at 7:05 p.m. on Monday, April 3, 2006 in the West Annex meeting room at Torrance City Hall.

2. **SALUTE TO THE FLAG**

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Ulrich.

3. **ROLL CALL**

Present: Commissioners Galvin, Lee, Rische, Santome, Tsao, and Ulrich.

Absent: Chairperson Lewis.

MOTION: Commissioner Ulrich moved to grant an excused absence to Chairperson Lewis for the April 3, 2006 Traffic Commission meeting. Commissioner Tsao seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

Due to the absence of Chairperson Lewis, Vice-Commissioner Santome led the meeting.

4. **AFFIDAVIT OF POSTING**

MOTION: Commissioner Tsao moved to accept and file the report of the City Clerk on the posting of the agenda for this meeting. Commissioner Rische seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval (absent Chairperson Lewis).

5. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES: MARCH 6, 2006**

MOTION: Commissioner Ulrich moved for the approval of the March 6, 2006 Traffic Commission meeting minutes as submitted. Commissioner Galvin seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval (absent Chairperson Lewis).

6. **ITEMS UNDER CONSIDERATION**

6a. **CONTINUATION OF THE DISCUSSIONS REGARDING THE UPDATE OF THE
CIRCULATION ELEMENT OF THE CITY OF TORRANCE'S GENERAL PLAN**

Transportation Manager Semaan reported that a summary of meetings regarding the update of the Circulation Element was included in the material of record, noting that comments from the public and Traffic Commission were listed, as well as a recommended plan of action for each. He requested that Commissioners review comments, provide additional input, take public input, and recommend that comments be forwarded to the General Plan consultants and Planning Commission for their review and consideration.

Commissioner Galvin discussed ideas from the April 1, 2006 Traffic Engineers Commission Workshop that she attended in Pomona, California. Referring to school area traffic, she suggested adding the creation of wider parking lanes for drop off and pick up, utilizing inbound and outbound entrances and exits as well as a valet parking system, creating a safe route to school plan, installing yellow crosswalks and pedestrian count down signals, and implementing staggered school start and end times. She offered further suggestions that include in-pavement flashing crosswalks, adequate signage and lighting in construction areas, installation of bus benches across from walking signals, and ensuring that trees do not obstruct signage.

Transportation Manager Semaan responded that the City implements 80-90% of those suggestions. He stated that staff works with Torrance Unified School District and school principals to utilize on-site circulation on school sites rather than the streets. He advised that a valet program is utilized extensively at the elementary school level, that a Safe Route to Schools study for elementary schools was recently completed, and that yellow crosswalks are applied on a regular basis. He stated that in-pavement flashers and pedestrian count down signals have been contemplated in the past and will continue to be considered, that TUSD has been cooperative in staggering school hours, and that construction area signage and lighting are monitored on a regular basis.

Responding to Commissioner Galvin's inquiry, Transportation Manager Semaan stated that it was not uncommon for traffic control devices to be hit by vehicles, and that it was the City's responsibility to replace or repair a sign if the driver failed to stop or there were no witnesses.

Commissioner Rische expressed concern that talking on cell phones while driving was a dangerous practice.

In response to Commissioner Lee's inquiry regarding the last comment on page 2, Transportation Manager Semaan provided clarification that a pedestrian connectivity survey would determine areas where there are gaps in continuous sidewalks on the same street.

When Commissioner Rische noted that older areas of Seaside have partial and aging sidewalks, Transportation Manager Semaan stated that the City's direction today is to condition a development to install sidewalks as a property recycles. He added that the City maintains existing sidewalks but does not install new ones.

Commissioner Ulrich inquired if a municipality could adopt an ordinance banning cell phone use by drivers, noting safety and traffic flow concerns. Transportation Manager Semaan offered to check with the City Attorney's office, noting that the Police Department gathers statistical information on cell phone use on its traffic collision reports.

When Commissioner Ulrich noted that many cities allow left turn traffic to continue after a left turn arrow turns red, Transportation Manager Semaan advised that staff was in the process of determining areas where this would be feasible.

Commissioner Ulrich suggested more aggressive enforcement of left hand turn violations.

Commissioner Tsao recommended installation of count down pedestrian signals at major intersections.

At 7:30 p.m., Vice-Chairperson Santome welcomed public input.

Kevin Riley, Loftyview Drive, expressed concern about lack of enforcement of on street parking of commercial vehicles, noting that in his neighborhood several residents run businesses out of their homes. He suggested banning overnight parking of commercial vehicles on residential streets so that the City does not become an industrial park.

Robert Feldman, Cathann Street, referring to an interview with Mayor Walker in the April 2, 2006 issue of the Daily Breeze, expressed concern that Torrance was viewed as a big city and that change was inevitable. He discussed loss of control of the City's direction and increasing pass through traffic. He stressed the importance of finding creative solutions and looking "outside the box," noting that the Strategic Plan represents a well thought out cross section of the community.

Doyle Wolfgang, Maricopa Street, expressed concern that the Del Amo Boulevard extension from Crenshaw Boulevard to Madrona Avenue was taking so long.

Arthur Evans, Arvada Street (no speaker card), stated that property owners are assessed for the installation of sidewalks and expressed concern that there was insufficient enforcement of commercial trucks parked on Sepulveda Boulevard.

Kevin Riley, Loftyview Drive, suggested installing double left turn lanes to relieve traffic back up on southbound Crenshaw Boulevard and eastbound Pacific Coast Highway.

Mark Chen, Talisman Street, stated that drivers ignore posted signs and park in the loading zone in front of Jefferson Middle School.

Don Clouch, West 238th Street, discussed the problem of pass through traffic in residential areas, especially the southeast section of the City.

Responding to Commissioner Galvin's inquiry, Transportation Manager Semaan explained that a towed trailer is not included when calculating the length of a vehicle, and that dimensional information for oversized vehicles has been forwarded to City Council. He advised that if a commercial vehicle does not have weight constraints under the Municipal Code it would not be restricted.

Commissioner Galvin suggested the possibility of limiting school enrollment to Torrance residents only and to require students to attend their "home" schools. Transportation Manager Semaan responded that these issues were under the purview of Torrance Unified School District and that traffic enforcement officers were responsible for addressing safety concerns at school sites.

Kevin Riley, Loftyview Drive, suggested that school buses be provided and paid for by parents to alleviate traffic congestion.

Bronco Popovich (no speaker card), expressed support for bussing students and suggested utilizing school playgrounds as pick up areas.

Commissioner Rische discussed parental attitudes and increased traffic congestion in the City. He stated that the City needed to address pass through traffic, citing lane changes made in the cities of Palos Verdes Estates, Rolling Hills, and Lomita. He concurred with Mr. Feldman's comments and encouraged residents to voice their concerns at City Council meetings.

Commissioner Tsao voiced support for increased traffic enforcement and finding solutions to problems that face the City.

Vice-Chairperson Santome received clarification that this was the last meeting for public input at the Traffic Commission level. He informed residents that the next General Plan Workshop will take place on Wednesday, April 26, 2006 in Council Chambers at 7:00 p.m.

MOTION: Commissioner Ulrich moved to forward all comments received regarding the update of the Circulation Element to the General Plan consultant and the Planning Commission for their review and consideration. Commissioner Galvin seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-2 as reflected in the following roll call vote (absent Chairperson Lewis):

AYES: Commissioners Galvin, Lee, Tsao, and Ulrich.
NOES: Commissioners Rische and Santome.

7. ORALS

Transportation Manager Semaan relayed information about the Recreational/Oversized Vehicle item discussed at the March 28, 2006 City Council meeting. He advised that the issue has been deferred to the Planning and Design Committee to make their recommendations, and that interested parties would be notified of meeting dates.

Referring to 235th Street and Western Avenue, Transportation Manager Semaan stated that the City was filing a motion in mid-April 2006 opposing the installation of a traffic signal by Cal Trans.

Commissioner Ulrich encouraged residents to contact Assemblyman Lieu's office regarding potential impacts caused by installation of this traffic signal.

Commissioner Rische stated that he regretted voting for the "grandfathering" clause in the Recreational Vehicle ordinance recommendation made by the Traffic Commission. He expressed concern that the Planning Commission considers proposals for developments on a case-by-case basis, contending that time and paper is being wasted in preparing the General Plan update if it is not going to be followed. He stated that part of the traffic problems facing the City today have been caused by "zone busting" and that growth could be controlled by "just saying no."

Commissioner Tsao stated that he might not have voted in favor of the RV ordinance if he had known that City Council was exploring the possibility of providing RV storage sites. He expressed support for holding additional meetings for residents to voice their concerns.

Transportation Manager Semaan provided clarification that Planning and Design Committee meetings would be open to the public and that input would be solicited.

Vice-Chairperson Santome discussed reasons why he voted against the RV ordinance as drafted, noting that less law is better, that a 72 hour rule is in reality a ten day rule, and that increased enforcement was necessary. He stated that he voted against tonight's motion regarding the Circulation Element because the document was confusing and that not nearly enough public input has been taken.

Commissioner Rische discussed the safety and aesthetic issues involved with recreational and commercial vehicle parking on City streets, and stressed the need for balance and finding a "happy medium."

Commissioner Ulrich stated that the Traffic Commissions' recommendations regarding the RV issue and Circulation Elements were perhaps flawed, but that they are working documents that City Council can work with, noting that there are still opportunities for input from citizens.

Arthur Evans, Arvada Street, stated that many residents would challenge the law and contest traffic citations if the RV ordinance is adopted.

Kevin Riley, Loftyview Drive, stated that in a democracy the majority rules, noting that the vast majority of 135,000 Torrance residents do not want RV parking on public streets.

Don Clouch, West 238th Street, stated that RVs should not be stored on public streets and estimated that there are 3,000, not 400, RVs in the City. He stated that 238th Street would be the street most impacted if the signal is installed and diverters placed at 235th Street and Western Avenue.

Janet Payne, Engracia Avenue, commended Commissioners for working with staff and putting forth documents that can be worked with. She expressed concern that traffic problems will increase around Wilson Park when the 300-unit development is built.

Transportation Manager Semaan offered to explain traffic signal operations, efficiencies, and data analysis with her at a later date.

Commissioner Rische concurred with Ms. Payne that the project was an abomination in terms of traffic, stressing the importance of "eternal vigilance."

8. **ADJOURNMENT**

At 9:10 p.m., Vice-Chairperson Santome adjourned the meeting to May 1, 2006 at 7:00 p.m.

Approved as Submitted May 1, 2006 s/ Sue Herbers, City Clerk
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